Victory for Workers' Soviet Republic.

SECOND EDITION

Workers' Dreadnought

FOR INTERNATIONAL COMMUNISM.

Founded and Edited by SYLVIA PANKHURST.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

IS UNEMPLOYMENT NECESSARY?

By O. F. BRANSETTER.
Of the Chicago Labour World.

A Marxian American gives his View Point. The Scourge of War. The Juggernaut of Capital.

There are three million workers involuntarily idle in the United States at the present time. This is not an unusual condition in our industrial posed, which deals wih unemployment as a temporary or unusual problem, is superficial and valueless.

To attempt to explain the present unemployment as entirely a result of the cessation of the war and the necessity of industrial readjustment to a peace basis, is to insult the intelligence of every student of the subject and of the millions of working men who tramped the streets begging for jobs in the winter of 1918 following the Armistice, in the winter of 1914 following the outbreak of the Great War, in 1908, during Mr. Taft's psychological depression, in 1903 during Mr. Roosevelt's administration, and in 1893-4 during the great "over production" panic.

Unemployment before the War.

It is true that the waves of unemployment in 1914,1918 and 1921 can apparently be traced to effects growing out of the war, but the simple explanation "on account of the war" is hardly satisfactory when we recall that equally large numbers of workers were involuntarily idle in 1908 and 1903, when there had been no war and we had been enjoying an exceptional period of prosperity.

In 1912, a Commission on Industrial Relations, appointed by Mr. Wilson, reported:

> "Wage earners in the principal manufacturing and mining industries in the United States lose on the average from one-fifth to one-fourth of the working time during the normal year . . . Statistics of highly organised trades show that even in times of greatest industrial activity, there is a considerable percentage, ranging from 7 to 15 per cent. of all the members of unions in different trades and industries, of workers who are unemployed during the year. In any year the unemployed who congregate in the large cities alone during the winter months, number several hundred thousand, while in years of industrial depression, the number of unemployed in the entire country is at least three million."

Unemployment is a chronic evil of our industrial system. We have what may be called a "standing army" of unemployed numbering from five hundred thousand to one million in normal times, which is periodically increased to two, three or four million during industrial depression.

American Bureau Investigation.

In 1903 the American Bureau of Labour conducted an investigation, not only into the extent, but also into the cause of unemployment.

The result shows that 6 per cent. of the unemployment was due to vacations, 2 per cent. was due to strikes, and ½ per cent. was due to drunkenness. This makes less than 9 per cent. of voluntary idleness. Adding 14 per cent. due to sickness makes less than 23 per cent. for which the workers were in any way personally responsible. All the rest of the unemployment, over 77 per cent., was involuntary on their part. It was forced upon them when they were willing and able to work, by forces over which they had no control.

The report shows further, that 12 per cent. was due to bad weather which interfered with outdoor work, and that 56 per cent, considerably over one half, was due to "closed shops, slack work, and inability to get work."

Why should millions of men be unable to "get work," when their families are suffering for necessaries of life and the factories in which these necessaries can be produced are standing closed? Why cannot this army of the unemployed go into the idle mills, mines, land and factories and produce with their own labour the things which they require?

The answer is quite simple. They do not *own* the factories and they have no *right to work* there—nor anywhere. This brings us to a point where we begin to uncover so meof the fundamental causes of unemployment.

Our society is oganised, industrially, upon the basis of private ownership. All the great industries are privately owned and operated with the single purpose of making profits for the private owners.

They are not allowed to work as long as they are willing to work, nor as long as the children are hungry or the wife needs shoes, but only so long as it is profitable to some member of the master class.

Another need for the unemployed is found in seasonal industries. A seasonal industry is one which is operated for a portion of the year with a reduced force, or on reduced time, in some instances closed down completely. Then comes a period of feverish activity in which additional men are employed, perhaps a night shift is engaged, and the factory operates at full capacity, turning out the goods for the next season's orders. Most of our great industries have become to a greater or lesser extent, seasonal industries.

Suppose that in a given industry ten thousand men are normally employed and when the rush season arrives, five thousand "extra hands" are needed. Where can five thousand extra men be had if there are no unemployed? They cannot be had, and failure to secure them means a crippling of the industry and a lessening of its profits.

In order that such industries may have extra hands when needed, it is necessary that thousands of men and women wait outside the factory gates through long weary weeks or months until the time arrives that extra hands are needed. Then the gates are opened and they are allowed to work as long as it is profitable for the employers, and no longer.

Keeping Wages down.

The army of unemployed, however, serves a still more useful function than that of furnishing men for temporary enterprises and extra hands to permanent industries. It is the army of unemployed outside the factory gates that keeps down the wages of those employed on the inside. It is the competition of the working class among themselves for the jobs that are never enough to go round that keeps wages down and enables the employers to make still greater profits. When this competition results in reducing wages to an intolerable extent, and the employed workers go on strike, it is the army of unemployed that furnishes the strike breakers.

The system so operates, that a sufficient number of men are kept unemployed at all times to effect these results.

If too great a proportion of the workers are employed, the effect is to temporarily bring about a crisis of unemployment.

Granting that there is or can be work for everyone under the present system, what is the inevitable result? There is little or no competition among the workers, and wages rise, strikes are not necessary or are uniformly successful because there are no unemployed men to take the strikers' places, instead of the workers competing for an insufficient number of jobs, the employers compete for the services of an insufficient number of men. Wages continue to rise in every industry until they actually catch up with or pass the increases in the cost of living. As long as this lack of competition lasts there can be no cessation in the increase of wages, and after a certain point, such increases come, wholly or in part, out of the employers' profits.

Bosses create unemployment.

Now what happens under these conditions? Does the employer continue to pay wage increase after wage increase until all his profits are gone? He does not. As soon as the increasing wages seriously reduce or threaten to destroy his profits, he closes down his plant. He is not in business for his health. He is not operating his factory

MESSAGE FROM THE MOSCOW WORKERS TO COMRADE SYLVIA PANKHURST.

On the anniversary of "Bloody Sunday," January 22nd, the working men and women of the city of Moscow brand with shame and ignominy the acts of the capitalist English Government, which sent to prison Comrade Sylvia Pankhurst, our brave and courageous sister in arms, the self-sacrificing and devoted champion of Communism.

As free working-citizens of the first Proletarian Republic of the World, enjoying all political and social rights, we send to Comrade Sylvia Pankhurst our warmest and most sincere greetings, above the heads of our common enemies, the capitalists, the owners, the "rich." And to you, English working men and women, we send the appeal; Rise up! Begin at last the fight against your enemies.

Only by united efforts and by a common fight of the proletariat of the whole world shall we be able to realise the great tasks of Communism and put an end to the violence, the injustice and the contempt from which the weak are suffering.

We, Russian working men and women of Moscow, solemnly promise to intensify our struggle against our common enemies, and by the consolidation of Soviet Russia, to hasten the death of the bourgeois world.

There are no words strong enough to denounce the world oppressors!

There is no expression strong enough to give voice to our indignation at the barbarous violences of your Government, to voice our enthusiasm and our admiration for your revolutionary courage, and to express our ardent sympathy with you!

Long live Communism and its devoted, bold, and inflexible struggle!

for the benefit of the public or to give work to working men. He is in business for PROFIT.

When he can make no profit out of his employees, he closes the doors of his factory in their faces and denies them the opportunity of working. Against this denial the workers are powerless to protect themselves. The employer OWNS the factory, and they have no RIGHT to work there without his consent.

What this owner does, others do. All over the country, mills and mines and factories are closed down and hundreds of thousands or millions of men are forced into involuntary idleness. Why? Because there had been work for everybody, because there had been no army of unemployed to furnish strike breakers, and no competition in the labour market to keep wages down and enable the employer to make a satisfactory profit. In other words, millions of workers are unemployed because all the workers were employed.

This, in fact, is the condition at the present time. During the war, for the first time in thirty years, there actually was work for everyone, and this, for the reasons stated, is the inevitable result.

Can Everybody Work?

Let us examine the possibility of work for everybody from another angle. The condition upon which men work in modern industrial establishments is that whatever they produce shall belong to their employer. In return, therefore, they receive a portion of its value in the form of wages. The portion they receive varies in different industries, from one-fifth to four-fifths of the value their labour has created.

When the working man goes out on Saturday night and spends every penny of his earnings, he is able to buy goods equal in value to only a portion of the goods which his labour produced. When the entire working class goes out and spends every dollar it has received in wages, it is able to buy back but a portion of the wealth which the entire working class has produced.

The remainder stays in the hands of the employing class. It represents their interest, rent and profit.

They use a part of it for their personal needs. They use a part of it in the extension and improvement of their industries, and the surplus is disposed of in foreign markets. When the foreign market is not sufficient to absorb this surplus, it results in an accumulation of which they can make no profitable disposition. They cannot sell it to the working class because the workers have spent all their earnings in purchasing only a portion of the product; they cannot consume it in even the most riotous dissipation because of its enormous quantity; they cannot put it back into industry profitably because the means of production are more than adequate for the time being, as is proven by the existence of this unconsumed and unsaleable surplus.

It is useless to manufacture more goods when they cannot dispose of those which they have on hand. And so, the output is restricted or the factories closed entirely, with a resulting increase in the army of the unemployed.

Recurring Overproduction.

This over-production, or the necessity of restricting output to prevent such over-production, occurs every few years. The surplus gradually accumulates during normal years when there are upwards of a million workers constantly unemployed.

What would be the result if those million idle men had been put to work? Every one of them would have produced more wealth than he could buy back with the wages he received. That is the only condition under which the workers are allowed to work under the present system. A million extra workers, producing a surplus for the master class, means that just that much sooner, or so many days or weeks or months earlier, the markets would be glutted with the surplus product and the country face to face with the greatest over-production panic we have ever had.

Mills and mines and factories would again close down, and millions of workers be thrown out of employment. Why? Because everyone had had a job. Because everyone had been producing more wealth than he could buy back and thereby creating a surplus for which there was no market. And again we have the army of the unemployed because everyone had been employed.

This chronic condition of unemployment for hundreds of thousands, and periodical unemployment for millions, is an inevitable result of industrial capitalism. It cannot be explained or excused or denied away. It is here and here to stay, as long as the present system lasts.

Some temporary relief can and should be afforded through the development of social unemployment insurance and the extension of public works during the periods of industrial depression.

Such relief, however, can be only partial in extent and temporary in character. To the extent that it demobilises the army of unemployed and lessens competition in the labour market, it creates those very conditions which lead to a new wave of unemployment.

There is only one practical remedy, and it will not be applied by the capitalist class because it is destructive to capitalism.

The Remedy.

The remedy is to give the working class access to the means of production, to secure to them the right to work without permission of the master class, and to give them a purchasing power equal to the value of their products.

This would prevent the arbitrary closing of industries while men were willing to work and in need of things which they could produce. It would eliminate the necessity of wars of conquest for foreign markets and the danger of over-production panics.

There would be a home market for the entire output. The working class itself could buy back all that it produced. If it produced more than it could possibly use and it was necessary to curtail production, the workers would consume the surplus in comfort and enjoyment instead of suffering for the surplus locked in the warehouses of their masters, as they do at present.

To effect these results, it is necessary that the great industrial enterprises be collectively instead of privately owned; that they be operated for the benefit of the working class instead of for the profit of private owners; and this is Communism.

The choice is open to the working class. They can have Communism or they can have Capitalism. If they choose Capitalism they choose unemployment and all its resultant evils because an army of unemployed is necessary for the successful operation and continued existence of the Capitalist System.

BETWEEN OURSELVES.

By L. A. MOTLER.

Henry was reading from a yellow-backed novelette which he had triumphantly "captured" by *force majeure* from one of the examining girls. There were several intervals of guffawing when he read some sentimental extracts. And then—and then he came to some poetry.

The working-class have not really much time for poetry, but they do take a critical interest in it. Henry read out—

"And while she sealed all England with a kiss,
Bright over Europe fell her golden hair."

"Now, that is what I call good poetry," he said, putting down the novelette, now much smeared with the printer's ink which had transferred itself from his hands.

"Talking about poetry," said young Bert, who had recently shown signs of being grown-up by wearing trousers too long and too baggy for him, "give me 'The Firemen's Wedding.'"

"Shut up, kid," said Jack. "What I don't like about that poetry you just spoke, Henry, was about Europe. What price the Germans?"

"It's an old bit," said Henry.

Old James shuffled up. "You're a bit out of date, you youngsters," he remarked, wiping away the superfluous snuff he had just taken with the back of his hand. And he began humming—

"Wash me in the water, you washed your dirty daughter,
And I shall be whiter than the whitewash on the wall."

Jack grunted and said something about rotten old army songs. He resumed the discussion with Henry.

"I reckon old Shakespeare knew something about poetry; you know that bit about 'Come the four corners of the world in arms and we'll give 'em what for, not half.' Or something like that. English all through, I call it."

"England is a fine country," put in Mac, sarcastically.

"Well, of course," said Henry, imitating Mac's voice. "You come from Scotland, so you know a fine lot about it."

"As a matter of fact I was born in Co. Wicklow," said Mac. "But anyway you were talking about Shakespeare. He has a fine piece about this blessed country—meaning England, which you may not know. It goes like this:

'This royal throne of kings, this sceptred isle,
This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars,
This other Eden, demi-paradise,
This precious isle set in a silver sea,'

and so it runs on, no end."

"I read it in a book once," said Old James, taking another pinch of snuff and beginning to look sentimental. It was probably a book he had presented him by his Sunday School for his taking care of the Sabbath, which is so easily broken by bold, bad boys who know no better.

"I have all his works at home," said Jack. "A fine present I got on weekly payments. Looks well in the front parlour, it does. I haven't had time to read much of it yet, but I'll look up what Mac says. Jolly fine I call it. Shakespeare didn't half know England, he didn't."

"And he didn't know Whitechapel, not 'arf," put in Mac, in a Cockney accent.

"Well, of course," said Henry, "all good things have their drawbacks. You have to take the good with the bad." And he tried to look philosophical.

"Besides Whitechapel is what it is owing to them there Jews," said Jack.

"That's a libel," said Mac. "Why it was much worse before the Jews came. What about Ratcliff Highway and Jack the Ripper?"

"And Sweeney Todd," guffawed young Bert.

"Of course Mac would stick up for the Jews," remarked Jack, turning to Henry for support, and Henry nodded. "You read Karl Marx and believe in what he writes, as if it was the Bible. And Marx was a Jew, if there ever was one."

"So was Jesus," put in Mac.

It was afterwards felt that Mac had scored in a way, but it was felt somehow that he had made a misbloomer, as Henry put it, in dragging in Jesus. Henry said he wasn't a religious man himself, bet it was well known Mac was "an atheist," and he really didn't ought. Now if Old James had said that. He went to Sunday School, Old James did. And what if he went in for betting the rest of the week? A man has a right to do what he liked with his own money.

"Now, Mac, really!" said Old James.

"Well, that's a fact," asseverated Mac. "But anything for a quiet life. We were talking of England as being a fine country. And so it is. But who owns it?"

Henry was going to say the Jews. But he remembered himself in time. So he said instead, "Well, who does?"

"Well, you don't for one," snapped Mac. "And yet you went and fought for it. Now all the country you own is what you wipe off on the mat. Why don't the workers own their own country?"

TESTIMONIAL FOR TOM MANN.

In accordance with the rules of the Amalgamated Engineering Union, our Comrade Tom Mann's term of office expires shortly. This fearless and untiring champion of our cause should not be allowed to sink into oblivion through lack of financial support. It has been proposed to present him with a testimonial, not merely to alleviate the acute financial position in which he will be shortly be placed, but to demonstrate appropriate appreciation of his ardent allegiance to the cause of the workers during the past thirty years.

Comrades desirous of helping in a practical manner should communicate with: Frank Cooper, 130, Lower Richmond Road, Putney, S.W. 15.

THE NEW REDEMPTION.

"The natural law of our evolution in class-consciousness leads us as individuals to unite in our craft, as crafts to unite in our industry, as industries in our class, and the finished expression of that evolution is, we believe, the appearance of our class upon the political battle-ground, with all the economic force behind it to enforce its mandates. Until that day dawns our political parties of the working class are but propagandist agencies, John the Baptists of the New Redemption; but when that day dawns our political party will be armed with all the might of our class, will be revolutionary in fact as well as in thought."—James Connolly, in "The Political Action of Labour."

WHAT ARE ECONOMICS? A Study of the Question of Food, Drink, Etc.

(*Continued from last issue*).

While it is the business of every government to feed, clothe, and house the population, it is the business of the capitalist and profiteering government to bring down the standard of living just to that point below which the people would rise in rebellion, just to the poverty line, to the fodder basis.

Go to what capitalist country you please, and you will find that the wage-slaves never have more than just enough to keep them alive from week to week, and that a *certain proportion* of them are always unemployed, just to keep those who are at work in the state of fear lest they should lose their jobs.

We will glance again at our items of food and clothing, and we see that all the profits are made out of wage-slaves. Every day that the worker spends at work in the field or factory, he is producing far more than enough for his own needs, and for the wear and tear of the machinery, he is producing a large surplus value which the "owner" puts into his pocket, after, as we remarked before, giving the worker a miserable pittance, which he calls wages; just enough to keep the worker alive, and to enable him to bring up a family of young wage-slaves: not enough, by any means, to rear them as they *should* be reared. You will always notice that the children of the working-class are smaller, paler, thinner, and less healthy than the children of the capitalists. The money which the capitalist puts into his pocket is used to maintain people who do no work at all. If the factory is a large one, this money is paid out as interest or dividends to different shareholders. We will speak of this another time, more in detail, and will content ourselves here with reminding you that shareholders do no work whatever for the money which comes to them as income.

You will notice, especially if you happen to be a woman who has to lay out the money, that the prices are very high, and this is because, in addition to the factory-owner, etc., there are a large number of people who live by buying goods from the wholesaler at a certain rate, and then retailing them to you at a higher rate. These are shopkeepers and middle-men. They are not *making* or *producing* anything, they are living by selling at a profit, which they get—out of *you*. Many of these people are in a very small way of business, some may even be relations of yours. They often work very hard and for long hours in their shop; such people as these can only benefit by a change of system. As for the people in a large way of business, they are sweating and oppressing the workers at every turn.

The capitalist profit-making system is not content with sweating the workers, with overcharging them for their food, it also taxes them on their food. Tea and tobacco, for instance, are taxed. This is called *indirect* taxation. This tax brings in a very large sum of money to the Government, because nearly everybody drinks tea and smokes tobacco, and this sum of money is used by the Government to pay interest on War Loan, to the rich people who invested money in war stock. Some of you, no doubt, were silly enough to have put some money into War Loan, so as to help on the war and get your boys home sooner; but you must have drawn most of it out by now, as times have been bad with you lately. Again, taxes are put on postage so that every time you write a letter or get a parcel or a postal order, you are paying a Government tax, which is used, not to get you the things you need, such as houses, but to maintain the Army, the Navy and the Police, none of which things are of any use to you, as they are not here to protect people's *lives*—quite the reverse often—but to protect *property*. The Royal Irish Constabulary *alias* the "Black and Tans," the Secret Service of Scotland Yard *alias* the Spy System, these things are paid for out of *your* pocket, by indirect taxation. The Government always levies taxes on food and tobacco before it will raise the income tax, or put on an excess profit tax, because it is a Government which acts in the interests of the capitalists and rich people. If a Chancellor of the Exchequer were to talk of a levy on capital, he would have all the newspapers, next morning, rounding on him, and would have to give up the idea or his job: as his job is a very paying one—several thousands a year—he keeps the job, and puts another penny or so on the people's food, and you think this is all right because the papers tell you it is. The capitalists, as you know, run these papers, and they stuff them with all the things they want you to believe. One day you will wake up and you will realise that *every burden which falls on the necessaries of life, hits the working-class, and as the working-class is the class which is producing these goods, then it must take possession of them and get rid of the shirking class.*

"Knowledge must precede all intelligent action." Let us try and see what it would be like it we did away with the capitalist profiteering system and produced for *Use*.

There is in this country a great deal of wealth in the shape of mines, houses, agricultural land, coal, iron and steel goods, clothing and factories of all descriptions. If we had our right share in these, as producers, we should be comfortably off and able to enjoy the amenities of life, educate ourselves in the Sciences and Arts, and be much better, healthier and happier than we are now. Not only would all this come about, but we weuld make rapid progress and advance in science and invention, for we should no longer be blocked by the capitalist who is always asking: "Will it pay to try this or that?"; but having got rid of that idea, we should be able to make innumerable researches in every field of science and make life on this planet easier and happier for everyone.

There are many objections which you will raise to this, just because you have been reading some of the dope in the capitalist papers and magazines, written by people who want to keep you where you are—in the slums—and themselves where they are—in well-paid jobs and in very comfortable conditions. These are some of the objections you will raise:—

1. There always have been rich and poor. It always has been so and always will.

2. If things were all shared out equally to-day, it would be just as uneven in a month's time, because some people would waste everything, and others would save. and so get all the money into their hands.

3. If I have worked hard all my life and bought myself a house, you will take that away from me.

4. I don't see how we can get on without the capitalist. He pays us our wages, and we must have people with brains who know how to manage things.

We will answer these questions in turn.

It is true there always have been rich and poor, as far as we are able to look back, because people did not know any better. There always have been rogues who made other people work and then took the stuff away from them, and there always have been fools who gave up the wealth they had produced to the rogues *until three years ago.*

In the autumn of 1917 the Russian people woke up and put a stop to this; the fools turned out the rogues from their high places and refused to give the rogues of the wealth which they, the fools, had produced. So you see it will not always be so. There is one country in the world now, where for three years there have been no rich or poor, no class distinction as we have it in this country.

This brings us to the second objection: "If things are all shared out evenly to-day, it will be just as bad in a month's time, because some folks will waste everything and others will get the wealth into their own hands."

Now this is just what the Russians said, for after all, people in Russia are not very different from us, and would be liable to make just the same mistakes as we should, and so the Russians said: "We must fix things so that it will be impossible for one man to squander his possession and for another man to cheat him out of them. We must build up a system by which no one can get profits and no one can squander."

They established the Soviet system—a system of Workers' Councils. No one who was not a workman could have a vote for these Councils. Their capitalists—those who had decided to remain in the country—must either do some useful work or go short of food.

These Soviets consisted of Factory Committees chosen by the workers in the factory, Trade Unions and village or town Soviets. The people who sit in these Soviets can be recalled at any time if the workers do not feel satisfied that they are doing their work properly. These, again, send delegates right through to the Central Departments at Moscow.

The work of these Committees and Soviets and Moscow Government is to consider production and feed, clothe and house the people, so every Factory Committee thinks out how much goods the factory is able to turn out in a specified time and reports this to headquarters; how much fuel it will need to work the machinery; how many people it can employ; how much raw material it wants, and so on.

This goes on in every Russian factory, and reports are then sent up to the Departments at Moscow. By this means the Government knows how much of any given produce there is in the country. The village Soviets give in a report of material such as cotton or wool they can produce in their area, and send that through in a similar way.

By this means the Government can regulate the production of manufactured articles and the feeding of the population and is rapidly putting down profiteering. The Russians do not find that their people wish to be lazy or to waste their time. They find, on the contrary, that since the workers have come into their rights, they are working a great deal harder and better than they did formerly, and are developing great initiative and skill.

We shall do wisely to take every opportunity we can of studying Russia, because we shall soon be obliged to take the control of our own Government, and we can learn a great many very useful lessons from Russia.

There is one lesson particularly we can learn from her. The Russian workers do not pay their Factory Committees or their village Soviet members, or even their Chief Commissioners any high salaries.

In capitalist countries, Members of Parliament, Trade Union officials and Cabinet Ministers get salaries far above the level of the workers' wages and this encourages them to try and keep the present system going; but in Russia the chief people of the country lead just as hard and rough lives as the workers in the villages and factories, and if they are not doing heavy manual work, they get a smaller allowance of food. Again, they can be recalled at any time; this is what we must be careful to see that we get here, for it puts officials on their mettle to do the best they can.

We come now to the third objection: If you have worked hard all your life and saved enough to build yourself a house, shall we take it away?

No. You must have worked very hard indeed to have saved as much as that from *your own labours*. It must be such a small house that it is not more than large enough for yourself and family. It is only in capitalist countries where workers are turned into the streets because they cannot pay the rent. If you are a single man or woman, we do not think you will mind giving a fellow-worker the use of your spare room if you have one, until we get enough houses put up. Under the Socialist State you will have the consolation of knowing that you will be provided for in your old age; while under the capitalist system, you are in constant dread of a rise in prices or of a bank failure which might swallow up all your hard-earned savings.

Regarding the fourth objection: Not being able to get on without the capitalist. I thought we had settled that point some time ago in dealing with the capitalist sytsem. As we do not seem to have been successful, you had better ask your little boy or girl of five years old, what he or she lives on. I don't think they will tell

(*Continued on page* 8).

Workers' Dreadnought

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THE WORKERS' DREADNOUGHT.

This number of the *Workers' Dreadnought* completes the seventh year of its existence; seven years of struggle, not only against financial difficulties, but also against the forces of reaction, which have waged a relentless war against it.

Its offices have been raided over and over again; printers have been intimidated, so that it was almost impossible to get it printed, it has been threatened several times with libel actions, one of which was successful; various wholesalers have boycotted it; its Editor is now serving six months in Holloway, but—it still continues to carry the message of emancipation and hope to the workers.

The *Dreadnought* was first published on March 22nd, 1914, when the struggle for Votes for Women was at its height. The Editor, Comrade Sylvia Pankhurst was a "mouse," and was staying with a friend in Hampstead, and comings and goings had to be managed with discretion. The technical knowledge of producing a paper was not very great in any of those who had to deal with it in those early days, but practice soon made perfect.

The paper only cost ½d. when it started, and we printed 20,000 copies a week, giving away those which we could not sell, as it takes time to build up a circulation when there are no funds for advertising. There was enthusiasm in the movement in those days, and many comrades undertook this work zealously, attending meetings, having a stall in the Roman Road on Saturdays, selling in the public houses and doing house to house distributing.

In its early days, the *Workers' Dreadnought*, or, as it was then called, the *Woman's Dreadnought*, dealt more fully with local East End matters, fights in the Borough Council, factory conditions, fights with the police, demonstrations in Trafalgar Square, which often ended in a conflict and many arrests. But it always had an international character and gave news from other countries, many well-known people contributing to its pages, amongst whom are the following:—

G BERNARD SHAW.
CHRISTOPHER ST. JOHN.
OLIVE SCHREINER.
ROBERT WILLIAMS.
ANKER KIRBELY.
J. & K. BRUCE GLASIER.
PHILIPS PRICE.
MRS. SHEEHY SKEFFINGTON
TOM WALSH (*Australia*).
BORIS SOUVARINE.
HENRIETTE ROLAND-HOLST.
ISRAEL ZANGWILL.
MARGARET MCMILLAN.
JOSEPH CLAYTON.
WILFRED WILSON GIBSON.
ANALISE RUGG.
G. D. COLE.
W. GALLACHER.
COUNTESS MARKIEWITCH.
J. T. MURPHY.
GEORGE LUKACS.
REGINA MIRIAM BLOCH.
C. RAPPOPORT.
CLARA COLE.
C. POPOVITCH.
NORA CONNOLLY.
HARRY POLLIT.
MRS. CAVENDISH BENTINCK
LOUIS C. FRAINA.
PATRICIA LYNCH.
ARTHUR FINCH.
IRAM K. MODERWELL.
L. A. MOTLER.
LAURENCE HOUSMAN.
R. WRIGHT KAUFFMAN.
GLADYS MENDL.
GEORGE LANSBURY.
MARY LEIGH.
MRS. MANSELL MOULIN.
MILES MALLESON.
MRS. COBDEN SANDERSON.
LYNN GALE (*Mexico*).
ROBERT DELL.
MARTINA KRAMERS.
HERMAN GORTER.
ADELA PANKHURST-WALSH.
H. W. NEVINSON.
ARTHUR FIELD.
LOUISE MUNCH.
SIEGFRIED BLOCH.
H M. EMERY.
EVA GORE-BOOTH.
E. G. CRAFTER.
G. TCHITCHERIN.
MELVINA WALKER.
G. M. SERRATI.
EVELINA HAVERFIELD.
BELA KUN.
CHARLOTTE DRAKE.
W. N. EWER.
CLARA ZETKIN.
ANTON PANNEKOEK.
M. O'CALLAGHAN.
ROMAN PRITCHARD.
S. SAKLATVALA.
J. T. WATKINS.

An attractive feature of the paper has been its cartoons by Herbert Cole, Babe, Redcap and others, as well as reproductions from noted foreign cartoonists.

The difficulties of producing the *Dreadnought* were very great at first, as there was not a regular staff to deal with it, and it meant extra work and long hours for those who were already working hard in the organisation. The postmen often used to complain of the pillar boxes being filled to overflowing with it, as it was dispatched from 400, Old Ford Road, and in the East End the pillar boxes are not provided for voluminous correspondence. One night each week a member could be seen trudging down to Devon's Road with copy, or fetching proofs to correct at midnight, for printers, more than any other class, are proverbial for not fulfilling their promises.

The Editor generally sat up the whole of one night a week writing for the paper, and often tc the early hours of the morning on other nights.

The chief aims of the *Workers' Dreadnought* were to rouse the workers to a realisation of their position, to teach them that they could only be emancipated by their own efforts, and to awaken in them an international spirit by giving them news from other countries and explaining the inward meaning of the various events as they occurred, and the utterances by those in authority and by their own leaders. It was the first paper to point out the bourgeois nature of the first Russian revolution and to support the Bolsheviki. It is the only paper that has consistently stood up for the workers and their actions, however much others may have criticised them.

It gave authentic Russian news by which it kept before the workers the importance of the great social changes taking place there.

Another duty it felt it had to perform was to urge on other Socialist bodies to take a more actively advanced line than they were sometimes inclined to do. It has always attacked what it considered wrong, fearlessly and often ruthlessly, as the only method open to it of drawing public attention to it, and at times it has suffered in consequence, but that has not, and will not, prevent it continuing to do so.

During the war it took a definitely anti-militarist stand, which was more unpopular then than it is now; supported the conscientious objectors; urged resistance to the Registration Act and Conscription; demanded the nationalisation of food early in 1915; £1 a week as a minimum wage for women in the Queen's Workrooms, and equal pay for men and women.

In October 1916, the prices of paper and printing had increased so much that it was found to be impossible to continue to charge only ½d. and the price was raised to a 1d. In May 1918, this had to be increased to 2d.

On July 28th, 1918, the name of the paper was changed from the *Woman's Dreadnought* to the *Workers' Dreadnought*, as the members realised that solidarity between men and women workers was essential if they were to win their fight. Also the paper catered for the men workers as much as for the women, and "Woman" in the title prejudiced many against it.

In the spring of 1916, our printer, after one of the numerous raids upon us, was told that if he continued to print it, his plant would be seized, so he was forced to give it up, and we went to the Blackfriars Press, which printed it until September 1918.

On August 25th, the *Dreadnought* contained a cartoon by Herbert Cole, of the Bishop of London embracing a gun, and Christ being led away as a conscientious objector by a policeman and a soldier. The issue for October 6th was being set up as usual by the Blackfriars Press, when detectives, without approaching the Editor or W.S.F., or giving any reason for their action, ordered the printer to destroy all copies of the paper and to melt down the type. They also removed some of the plant. Of course they raided the *Dreadnought* office too.

The question remained: who would print the paper in future? Mr. J. E. Francis, who had printed the first number and who has a strong sense of justice, gallantly came to the rescue. He tackled the authorities in their den and told them that as there was no legal justification for their action, he intended to print it, which he continued to do until July 5th 1919, when the policy of the *Dreadnought* became too revolutionary for him and he asked us to find another printer. We had the greatest difficulty in doing so, but at last got the Cosmo Printing Co. to undertake it. On January 31st 1920, we moved to the Agenda Press, where the paper is still being printed.

In spite of the present difficulties and the absence of the Editor, we shall endeavour to continue the work we have set out to perform.

In the forthcoming issues, we intend to publish as a serial, Sylvia Pankhurst's book "What I Saw in Russia in 1920," which is full of interesting facts and gives a vivid description of the places she saw. We hope this will stimulate our readers to make the paper more widely known and to obtain fresh subscribers.

TRADE WITH RUSSIA.

In our first edition a paragraph appeared: "Russian Gold: Sir Robert Not Afraid of It," which gave Sir Robert Horne's views on the recognition of the *De Facto* Govenrment of Russia. We printed that paragraph, picked out of the news at our disposal, in order to convey to our readers the information that the Trade negotiations with Russia were approaching a successful solution.

The signing of the Agreement is a fact of the first importance, and tribute must be paid to Comrades Kameneff and Krassin for the skill displayed.

Is it then Peace with Russia?

We believe it is not. We think this is a temporary—necessary—phase. The difference between a capitalist Government and a Socialist Soviet Republic is basic. On the other hand, two essential points are worth noting: Russia needs reconstruction, and she can better do that if she is able to import from industrial countries the machinery and finished industrial products she requires and which she is not yet able fully to produce.

She is in great difficulties with regard to her industries, but on the other hand, she cannot be beaten on the field of battle, and holding as she does, great natural resources, she is a factor which cannot be ignored, if Europe is to settle down to work.

England, on the other hand, needs export trade, and she is loth to let Russian trade go to America or Japan. She is desirous, too, of getting as much of the Russian reserve of gold as she possibly can, in order to re-assume her foremost banking and trading position.

Soviet Russia can penetrate in Asia—she does it in fact—for there are eager masses avid of freedom and liberty. The spread of Communistic ideals in the East would greatly harm European domination over the native races. Fom a capitalist point of view that had to be checked.

These are, briefly, the main reasons that prompted the signing of the Trade Agreement with Russia.

We shall deal at some length with this question in our next issue. Meanwhile, without being unduly elated, we are truly glad to hear of this news, because we consider it a great triumph for Soviet Russia.

To-day, that a Cabinet Minister has appended his signature to a binding document, together with that of a representative of the first Workers' Soviet Republic, well may we be amused remembering the mass of abuse that flew from Fleet Street fountain pens against our comrades' rule, against Lenin—bought by German gold—against the "Murder of the Czar," etc.

Success succeeds—or is it, excess succeeds, as Wilde would have it?

MORE WANGLING OF THE WAGES.

By C. B. JIMACK-WARWICK

Good profits made, shared out according to a beautiful plan, and although the servile ones are praised, yet "a fall of wages may be necessary."

That is the story boiled down, the story of the success and the lamentations of a firm working piously on principle.

The *Draper's Record* is responsible for publishing the facts (on February 19th), as embodied in the Company Report of a small drapery concern known as John Howell & Co.

The firm is carried on along a profit-sharing system. The Chairman, in the course of his address, said:—

"As to the staff, I wish to pay a very sincere tribute to the way they have done their work. . . . Re-reading *David Copperfield* lately, I came across these words: 'Unless we learn to do our duty to those whom we employ, they will never learn to do their duty to us.' If this was true 70 years ago, when Dickens wrote it, it is more than ever worthy of remembrance to-day. Notwithstanding the unfortunate trade conditions . . . we have not discharged a single employee. I fully anticipate that this will be made up to us by the loyalty and good work of the staff when the wheels of business start to revolve faster. *I do not say, however, that a fall in wages may not be necessary before long.*"

Let us dissect it, with a few notes, and see what the Dickens is at the back of all this twaddle. The "Staff" did their duty all right, making a clear profit last year of over £25,272.

Ah! but profits are shared!

Equality!

Of course they are; for four men, as recompense for "directive ability," drew £11,000, while the rest was shared with 300 worker-slaves, so the Dickensian precept has been well in the mind of all concerned; but, in order to get back some of the shared-out profits, the firm will be lowering the already low wages of drapers' assistants, and no doubt they will wangle matters very nicely, because of the *petrified loyalty* of the slaves.

Following from the Sales Department to the points of cotton goods production, we learn that, as from March 1st, the National and Allied Textiles Industrial Council are causing a decrease in male textile workers' wages of 7/- weekly, while the women's wages will be docked 5/-. And yet, reader, if you will turn to the *Workers' Dreadnought* of November 27th, last year, you will see facts proving that the textile firms are not so poor as they'd have the Dubbs imagine.

House and Ship.

From May 1st, builders are asked to take a reduction of 4d. per hour; this through the National Conciliation Board, where they have been demanding 6d. per hour extra, and the hours of labour are to be extended from 44 to 50. The Employers' Federation consider a 25 per cent. decrease in the wages of shipbuilders necessary if they are to maintain and extend their profits; of course, they don't say that, but that is what they really mean.

A HEROINE OF THE FRENCH COMMUNE.
LOUISE MICHEL.
Born at Troyes 1833. Died at Marseilles 1905.

Every industry is drawn into the wages war; thousands join the army of the workless, with their starvation dole—when they can get that even; the "fortunate" ones are, many of them, on short time, hence "shorter commons," and now even those who have fairly regular work are to be further robbed.

The employers in the mining industry (Wigan Coal and Iron Co. made £219,738 last year; Frodair Iron and Steel Co. made £18,887; and, listen to this, a Company known as Bolckow, Vaughan & Co., Ltd., controlling 10 North Devon collieries, during the past seven years, has made £4,440,830—fact!) threaten to cut down mine-slaves' wages. Think not o'er the profit part of the business. My figures are cold facts from the financial rags not read by the *proletaire*; for you and I, the following:—

"The coal mining industry is being run at a loss."

Of course it is! Therefore the scribe who knows all about it says wages must come down. He is a guy named J. E. Barker; he barked as per above in the *Pall Mall and Globe* on the 18th of last month.

The "Dye Hards."

The Dye Hards—I mean the "bosses" who control the Dyeing Industry in this 'ere country that many "*prolé's*" have died for, think those not dead who still toil for them, are getting too much. Its scandalous; soon the "bosses" will have to do their own dyeing; consider, serfs, the one of the firms, the Bradford Dyer's Association, in 1918, cleared £644,585; in 1919, £911,252, and last year, managed to get £954,265. (Going up! Going up! Starvation profits I calls 'em!).

Cool 50 per Cent.

Ship owners are also on the high seas; yes, they are, metaphorically speaking, but the Seafarer's Union members are sitting up in the rigging and taking notice. Fifty per cent will come off the month's wage; but the tars are not having any. While we are giving away Dye-bugs and Coal-parasites, we might as well say something about the Sea-barnacles. Cast thine optics over the following war profits of some Shipping Companies.

	1914 £	1916 £
British African S.S. Co.	41,357	94,328
Cunard Line	867,999	3,339,752
Indo-China S.S. Co.	45,394	109,089
F. Leyland	589,810	1,441,690
White Star Line	1,121,268	1,968,285

Not so dusty, eh? And since 1916, to the end of 1919, the Cunard Co. have roped in just £6,380,728.

Even our Municipalities are at it. The female scrubbers employed by the Bethnal Green Board of Guardians are in peril; the poor, hard-toiling women-slaves of this body are paid £2 10s.; the said body proposes to reduce this to 30/- per week; the said body ought to be well scrubbed in order to eradicate such filthiness!

There's plenty of pious, learned, capitalist justification for all this sort of thing.

Boots and Shoes.

Take the following, culled from *The Shoe and Leather News*, of March 3rd, in reference to a demand for an *increase* from the boot and shoe operatives; the Editor says:—

"Why not tell them that the decision does not rest with the employers, but with the consumers, of whom they (the workers) are a part? . . . The public have definitely decided against 'fancy prices' . . . it is no use at all to demand that manufacturers should further add to the costs by paying '*fancy wages.*' If they persist (the workers, in *their* demands), they may win—*powerful combination can do much*—but the victory will be a perilous one; *they might be entitled* to £5 per week, 40 hours to the week, and 52 pay days to the year, *but they would never get it, because the trade couldn't pay it and live.*"

Which sounds very convincing, but is so much "tripe," otherwise dope.

"Fancy wage," indeed! "Combination." Gee! that's an admission. So *realise solidarity of class-interest, slaves all; never mind whether the System can pay or not. You, the producers, are the people that socially matter. If the "bosses" can no longer work the System, sack them; in any case, prepare to control for your own class.*

INTERNATIONAL NOTES.

The Revolution in Georgia.

The Georgian Revolutionary Committee announces the occupation of Tiflis by the revolutionary Georgian workers and peasants. The Red Flag is now waving over the capital of Georgia.

Pravda congratulates the Georgian comrades and says that the Menshevist Georgia has been the last thrust of the counter-revolution. "In this Social-Democratic bog, all Russian fugitives found a refuge, where large landed proprietors, capitalists, merchants and money changers could squeeze out the Georgian workers and peasants. Now comes the hope that, through brotherly unity with the Soviets of Aserbeedspan, Armenia, and Georgia, the murderous enmity of classes will be finally stamped out."

The revolutionary committee of the Armenian district of Georgia issues the following address to the workers:—

"The peasants of the neutral zones have unfolded the flags of the Revolution and summoned the Soviet Republic. The bloody *régime* of 'democratic Georgia has driven the workers and peasants to revolt against the oppressors. This brotherly union of the Armenian, Tartar, Georgian, and Woloken peasants has brought speedy victory, and the Soviets in the province of Gory.

"The murderous Menshevists of Georgia have attacked and plundered our villages, but the soldiers of Georgia, we are proud to say, have made our cause their own. We know that our strong free brothers in Soviet Russia, Aserbeedspan, and Armenia will not let us fall back again into the hands of the oppressors.

"We place our hope in the protection of the other Soviet Republics. To you, workers and peasants, we send the greetings of the emancipated peasants of the province of Gory."

Henderson's Resolutions.

We would like, however, to console our I.L.P. fakir friends, Ethel Snowden, Bertrand Russell and Co. with the thought that all may not *yet* be lost for the "democrats" of Georgia. We learn that the last act of the retiring Constituent Assembly was to send an appeal to General Wrangel for help in the shape of war material of all kinds; so perhaps the said Wrangel with Mr. Churchill and Co. will yet be able to restore law and order in Georgia, and re-establish there a democracy to see that the working people do not get their rights.

We sometimes wonder what particular form of White Guardism will be patronised by our pacifist I.L.P. friends in *this* country, when the workers really *do* begin to think that they will wake up?

Roumania will not treat with Wrangle.

Rightly have Roumanian statesmen been dubbed the "astutest in Europe." Take Jonescu has placed 100,000 men at the service of counter-revolutionary forces; the trade agreement has been signed between Roumania and Soviet Russia, and now we learn that Wrangel has offered the Roumanian Government four transport vessels, so as to have 65,000 of his fugitives, and the Roumanian Government has refused, on the ground that it has never recognised Wrangel's Government and therefore cannot enter into treaty with it. How pi! We wonder whether a certain note sent by Comrade Tchitcherin to Take Jonescu had anything to do with this Wrangel "wangle," and what it really all means. Meanwhile the Roumanian Trade Unions are showing signs of linking up with the Third International, which shows what opinion they have of the Russian Soviets and of their own wily old rulers—and *they* ought to know something, as it is *their* country and *their* "bosses."

OPEN LETTER TO COMRADE LENIN.

An Answer to Lenin's Brochure: "'LEFT WING' COMMUNISM: AN INFANTILE DISORDER."

By HERMAN GORTER.

(Continued from last issue.)

You will possibly say that, although in Germany there is no great mass of poor peasants whose assistance can be relied on, the millions of proletarians that side as yet with the bourgeoisie are sure to come round. That, therefore, the place of the poor peasants in Russia will here be taken by the proletarians, so that there is help all the same. This representation is also fundamentally wrong, and the immense difference remains.

The Russian peasants joined the proletariat AFTER Capitalism had been defeated; but when the German workers that are now as yet on the side of Capitalism join the ranks of the Communists, the struggle against Capitalism will begin in real earnest.

The revolution in Russia was terrible for the proletariat in the long years of its development—and it is terrible now, after the victory. But at the actual time of revolution it was easy, and this was due to the peasants.

With us it is quite the contrary. In its development the revolution was easy, and it will be easy afterwards; but its actual coming will be terrible—more terrible, perhaps, than any other revolution ever was, for Capitalism, which in your country was weak and only slightly rooted as it were to feudalism, the middle ages, and even barbarism, here in our country is strong and widely organised and deeply rooted, and the lower middle classes as well as the peasants, who always side with the strongest, with the exception of a shallow and economically unimportant layer, will stand with Capitalism until the very end.

The revolution in Russia was victorious with the help of the poor peasants. This should always be borne in mind here in Western Europe and all the world over. But the workers in Western Europe stand alone: this should never be forgotten in Russia.

The proletariat in Western Europe stands alone. This is the absolute truth: and on this truth our tactics must be based. All tactics that are not based on this are false, and lead the proletariat to terrible defeat.

Practice also has proved that these assertions are true, for the poor peasants in Western Europe have not only no programme and failed to claim the land, but they do not even stir now that Communism is approaching. As I have observed before, this statement is not to be taken absolutely literally. There are regions in Western Europe where, as we have mentioned before, landed property on a large scale is predominant, and where the peasants are therefore in favour of Communism. There are yet other regions where the local conditions are such that the poor peasants may be won for Communism. But these regions are comparatively small. Neither do I wish to imply that quite at the close of the revolution, when all things are coming down, there will be no poor peasants coming to our side. They undoubtedly will. That is why we must carry on an unceasing propaganda amongst them. Our tactics, however, must be adopted for the beginning and for the course of the revolution. What I mean is the general trend, the general tendency of conditions. And it is on these alone that our tactics must be based.†

From this there follows in the first place—and it should be clearly, emphatically and plainly stated—that in Western Europe the real revolution, that is to say the overthrow of Capitalism, and the *erection and permanent institution of Communism*, for the time being is possible only in those countries where the proletariat BY ITSELF is strong enough against all the other classes—in Germany, England, and Italy, where the help of the poor peasants is possible. In the other countries the revolution can only be prepared as yet by means of propaganda, organisation and fighting. The revolution itself can only follow when the economic conditions will be thus much shaken through the revolution in the big States (Russia, Germany, and England), that the bourgeois class will have grown sufficiently weak. For you will agree with me that we cannot base our tactics on events that may come, but that may also never happen (help from the Russian armies, risings in India, terrible crises, etc., etc.).

That you should have failed to recognise this truth concerning the importance of the poor peasants, Comrade, is your first great mistake, and likewise that of the Executive in Moscow and of the International Congress.

What does it mean with regard to tactics, this fact that the proletariat of Western Europe stands all alone: that it has no prospect of any help whatsoever from any other class?

It means, in the first place, that the demands made on the masses are far greater here than in Russia—that, therefore, the proletarian mass is of far greater importance in the revolution. And in the second place that the importance of the leaders is proportionately smaller.

For the Russian masses, the proletarians, knew for certain, and already saw during the war, and in part before their very eyes, that the peasants would soon be on their side. The German proletarians, to take them first, know that they will be opposed by the entire Capitalism of Germany, with all its classes.

It is true that already before the war the German proletarians numbered from nineteen to twenty millions of actual workers, on a population of seventy millions, but they stood alone against all the other classes.* They are opposed by a Capitalism that is immeasurably stronger than that of Russia—and they are UNARMED. The Russians were armed.

From every German proletarian therefore, from every individual, the revolution demands a far greater courage and spirit of sacrifice than was necessary in Russia.

This is the outcome of the economic class-relations in Germany, and not of some theory or idea risen from the brain of revolutionary romanticists or intellectuals!

Unless the entire class or at least the great majority stand up for the revolution personally, with almost superhuman force, in opposition to all the other classes, the revolution will fail; for you will agree with me again that on determining our tactics we should reckon with our own forces, not with those from outside—on Russian help, for instance.

The proletariat almost unarmed, alone, without help, against a closely united Capitalism, means for Germany that every proletarian must be a conscious fighter, every proletarian a hero; and it is the same for all Western Europe.

For the majority of the proletariat to turn into conscious, steadfast fighters, into real Communists, they must be greater, immeasurably greater, here than in Russia, in an absolute as well as a relative sense. And once more: this is the outcome, not of the representations, the dreams of some intellectual, or poet, but of the purest realities.

And as the importance of the class grows, the importance of the leaders becomes relatively less. This does not mean that we must not have the very best of leaders. The best are not good enough; we are trying hard to find them. It only means that the importance of the leaders, as compared to that of the masses, is decreasing.

For you, who had to win a country of 160 millions, with the help of seven or eight millions, the importance of the leaders was certainly immense! To triumph over so many, with so few, is in the first place a matter of tactics. To do as you did, Comrade, to win such a huge land, with such small forces, but with assistance from outside, all depends in the first place on the tactics of the leader. When you, Comrade Lenin, started the struggle with a small gathering of proletarians, it was in the first place your tactics that in the crucial moments waged the battles and won the poor peasants.

But what about Germany? There the cleverest of tactics, the greatest clearness, the genius of the leaders even, cannot attain much. There you have an inexorable class-enmity, one against all the others. There the proletarian class must turn the scales for itself—through its power, its numbers. Its power, however, is based above all in its quality, the enemy being so mighty and so endlessly better organised and armed than the proletariat.

You opposed the Russian possessing classes, as David opposed Goliath. David was little, but he had a deadly weapon. The German, the English, the West-European proletariat oppose Capitalism as one giant does another. Between them all depends on strength—strength of body, and above all of mind.

Have not you observed, Comrade Lenin, that in Germany there are no great leaders? They are all quite ordinary men. This points to the fact that this revolution must in the first place be the work of the masses, not of the leaders.

To my idea this is something more wonderful and grand than has ever been, and it is an indication of what Communism will be.

And as it is in Germany, it is in all Western Europe, for everywhere the proletariat stands alone.

The revolution of the masses, of the workers—of the masses of workers alone, for the first time in the world.

And not because thus it is good, or beautiful, or conceived in someone's brain, but because the economic and class-relations will it thus.‡

In other words, and to render the matter as clear as possible: the relation from the West-European to the Russian revolution can be demonstrated by means of the following comparison:—Supposing that in an Asiatic country like China or British India, where only one half per cent. of the inhabitants are industrial proletarians, and 80 per cent. small peasants, a revolution should break out, and should be successfully carried through by those small peasants under the lead of the politically and socially more trained proletarians that were united in local trade unions and co-operatives. If these Chinese or Indian workers proclaimed to them: "We have won through our local trade unions and co-operatives, and now you must do the same with regard to your revolution," what would the Russian workers have replied? They would have said: "Dear friends, this is impossible. Our country is far more developed than yours. With us not half, but three per cent. of the population are industrial proletarians. Our Capitalism is more powerful than yours, therefore we need better and more powerful organisations than you did."

In the same way as the Russians would have answered the Indians or Chinese, the workers of Western Europe, especially of England and Germany, must answer the Russians: "With us not three, but twenty per cent. of the population are industrial proletarians. Our Capitalism is a hundred times stronger than yours. We therefore need better industrial organisations and far stronger Communist Parties than you had."

From this difference between Russia and Western Europe there follows likewise:—

1. That when you, or the Executive in Moscow, or the opportunist Communists of Western Europe, of the Spartacus League, or of the English Communist Party, say: "It is nonsense to fight about the question of leader or masses," that you in that case are wrong as regards us, not only because we are yet trying to find those leaders, but also because for you this question has quite another meaning.

2. That when you say to us: "Leader and mass must be one inseparable whole," you are wrong, not only because we are striving for that unity, but also because that question has another meaning for you than for us.

3. That when you say: "In the Communist Party there should reign an iron discipline, and an absolute military centralisation," this is wrong, not only because we are seeking an iron discipline and strong centralisation, but also because this question has a different meaning for us and for you.

4. That when you say: "We acted in such and such a way in Russia (after the Korniloff offensive for instance, or some other episode), or we went in Parliament in this or that period, or we stayed in the trade unions, and therefore the German proletariat must do the same," all this means absolutely nothing, and need not or cannot be applicable in any way. For the West-European class relations in the struggle, in the revolution, are quite different from those of Russia.

5. That when you wish to force upon us tactics that were good in Russia—tactics, for instance, that were based, consciously or unconsciously, on the conviction that here the poor peasants will soon join the proletariat—in other words, that the proletariat does not stand alone—that your tactics, which you prescribe, and which are followed here, will lead the West-European proletariat into ruin, and the most terrrible defeat.

6. That when you, or the Executive in Moscow, or the opportunist elements in Western Europe, like the Central Board of the Spartacus League or the B.S.P., try to compel us to follow opportunist tactics (opportunism always seeks the support of foreign elements, that forsake the proletariat), you are wrong.

The general bases on which the tactics in Western Europe must be founded are these: the recognition that the proletariat stands alone, that it is to expect no help, that the importance of the mass is greater, and that of the leaders relatively smaller.

This was not seen by Radek when he was in Germany, nor by the Executive in Moscow, nor by you, as is evident from your words.

And it is on these bases that the tactics of the Kommunistische-Arbeiter Partei in Germany, the Communist Party of Sylvia Pankhurst,** and the majority of the Amsterdam Commission, as appointed by Moscow, are founded.

It is on these grounds that they strive, before all, to raise the masses as a whole, and the individuals to a higher level, to educate them one by one to be revolutionary fighters, by making them realise (not through theory only, but especially by practice), that all depends on them, that they are to expect nothing from foreign help, very little from leaders, and all from themselves.

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† You, Comrade, will surely not try and win in an argument by taking the assertions of your opponent in too absolute a sense, as small minds do. My above remark, therefore, is meant for the latter.

* Of course I had to take the pre-war ciphers, and have made the increase in proletarians after the last statistics (of 1909) to equal those previous.

‡ I do not touch here on the fact that *through this other* relation of numbers (20 millions to 70 millions in Germany!) the importance of the mass and the leaders, and the relation between mass, party and leaders, also in the course and at the close of the revolution here, will differ from those of Russia.

** So far, at least.

(To be continued.)

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE I.L.P.

At the Easter Conference, the I.L.P. is to be asked whether or not it favours affiliation to the Third International.

The chief objections raised against affiliation will doubtlessly be the hackneyed objections to the iron discipline as set forth in the much-execrated twenty-one conditions.

The I.L.P. has now arrived at that period in the history of the Socialist movement when every Socialist body right throughout the world will have to choose between adopting the clear-cut revolutionary policy of Moscow or the vacillating reformist policy of the Second International and its sickly child, now being nursed at Vienna.

An examination of the Socialist movement in Europe reveals to us a distinct cleavage between two schools of thought, namely, revolutionist and reformist. Classical examples of the reformist school are found in the persons of Macdonald, Henderson, and their various parallels in the different European countries.

All these people hate the Third International on account of the rigidity of its requirements, and on account of the emphasis it places upon the weapon of force as a factor in the Socialist Revolution.

Macdonald is very emphatic in his denunciations of the Third International, and one is inclined to believe that one of his reasons for such opposition is that the Third International leaves no room for indulgence in the wars of words so beloved by Parliamentarians.

At all events, the Third International leaves no doubt as to its righteous contempt for reformism.

And this contempt is based, not on an unreasoning and felicitous sentimentalism, but on such an observation of the facts as leaves no doubt as to the utter poverty of reformism.

The Third International, based as it is upon the findings of Marx, has drafted its statutes in accordance with things as they are, not as it would like them to be; which latter is the mistake too many I.L.P.-ers make.

If the I.L.P. is to continue existing as a Socialist body, it will have to drop its talk about each Socialist organisation working out its own salvation according to the number of tea-leaves in its own little nationalistic tea-cup. That is the most despicable form of nationalism, because it fails to recognise the sameness of the conditions produced in every country where Capitalism reigns supreme. In every capitalistic country we find society divided into exploiters and exploited, and everywhere we find the methods adopted by the exploiting class to keep the exploited class in subjection to be of a oneness that doth amaze us. It is as the result of hard fighting that the working classes of every country have won small concessions from the master class, and yet to-day they are worse off than their ancestors of two hundred years ago. In every country the policy of the capitalist class is the same, and in every country its overthrow will demand that the same weapon be resorted to—force.

We can debate and weep and despair as much as we like, but the cold, grim fact remains. Things are as they are, not as we'd like them to be.

The I.L.P. will have to choose between the realism of Moscow and the adumbrations of Vienna. Upon its choice will depend its future, naturally. What will it do? Will it heed the writing on the wall and the rumbling of the storm in the distance, or will it continue to be gulled by political dotards and quackish soothsayers?

The choice of the I.L.P. lies between science and superstition; between the science of a painted savage and the science of a Marx or a Darwin.

Its choice lies between faith in men and a scientific knowledge of men; of their desires and aspirations, of the motives which impel them to act, and of everything that goes to make up the gamut of a complete study of human affairs.

When the Easter Conference assembles, it will choose, not only between Moscow and a return by subterfuge to the Second International, but between facing the rising dawn cheerfully and courageously and making a cowardly return to the black night of reformism and compromise.

Let the I.L.P. face Moscow with a determination to look the facts squarely and unflinchingly in the face.

Let it unburden itself, once and for all, of the "lice of politics" who now ride on its back.

The purgatorial period consequent upon joining the Third International will leave the movement clearer, purer, and with more strength to carry on its work.

JACK EDWARDS.

37, Brighton Road, Gorseinon, near Swansea.

INTERNATIONAL MODERN SCHOOL.

Garment Workers' Hall, 54a Bedford Street, Commercial Road, E.1.

Re-opens MARCH 6th under the auspices of the Educational Group. Comrades and sympathisers are asked to send their children every Sunday from 2 to 6 p.m. Teachers willing to assist should write to the Secretary: Hetty Lewis, 43 Frederick Place, Burdett Road, E.1.

Owing to the Demonstration in Trafalgar Square, there will be no meeting at Holloway on Sunday, 20th.

50th ANNIVERSARY OF THE PARIS COMMUNE.

To All Parties and Organisations Affiliated with the Third International.

COMRADES,

This spring will be the 50th anniversary of the Paris Commune. Half a century has passed since the Paris workers, for the first time in history, rose against the bourgeoisie and seized power. The Paris Communards have written a page of undying glory in the golden book of the international proletarian movement. They have been the predecessors and forerunners of the present proletarian revolution in Russia and all over the world. In Paris, which is the seat of international reaction to-day, fifty years ago the proud red banner was raised, for which tens of thousands of the glorious Parisian proletarians perished.

The Executive Committee of the Communist International appeals to all conscious workers of the world to celebrate solemnly the 50th anniversary of the Paris Commune. The Executive Committee of the Communist International decided to dedicate to this anniversary a special number of the "Communist International."

The Executive Committee of the Communist International has further adopted the following resolution: The Communist workers of the world, united and represented in the Executive Committee of the Communist International, decide to erect a monument to the French Communards in Paris in the name of the Communist International. The Executive Committee of the Communist International takes the initiative in this matter and appeals to the Communist Parties of all countries to start a subscription for this purpose, and the French comrades are asked to assist in the accomplishment of this task.

The Executive Committee of the Communist International waits to see whether the present bourgeois Government of France will dare to hinder the international working class from erecting a monument to the heroes of the Paris Commune.

The Executive Committee of the Communist International.

G. ZINOVIEV (*Chairman*).

SIGNED: *Russia*: LENIN, TROTSKY, BUKHARIN, RADEK. *France*: ROSMER. *Holland*: JANSON. HUNGARY: BELA-KUN, RUDNIANSKY, VARGA. *Georgia*: TSKHKAYA. *England*: QUELCH. *Bulgaria*: SHABLIN. *Austria*: STEINHARDT. *America*: GUREVICH. *Persia*: SULTAN-ZADE. *Finland*: MANNER. *Latvia*: STUCHKA. *International League of Youth*: SHATSKIN.

THE RUSSIAN MOTHER.

Eye-witness A. Watts, of the Society of Friends, gives his Impressions.

27, Chancery Lane, E.C., and has been given permission to distribute relief in Russia. The Society is appealing for funds to send out goods, especially condensed milk, for Russian children.)

Russian mothers in the past had a queer habit of wrapping up their babies so tightly that they they could hardly move. A series of models showing how and why the little Russian baby should be properly clothed has been displayed at the Maternity Exhibitions arranged by the department of the Commissariat for Public Health. The demonstration has served its purpose. The mothers are apparently convinced that the old method of compressing the baby was a bad one, and they are abandoning it.

This is just a tiny illustration of the social work carried on by the Soviet Administration. Every mother who performs manual work is entitled to nine weeks' rest on pay before the birth of her child and nine weeks afterwards. With sedentary workers the period of rest is fixed at six weeks. Special rest homes have been established for expectant mothers, while assistance is given to those who remain in their own homes.

(Mr. Arthur Watts is the Moscow representative of the Society of Friends' International Mission,

The authorities are at present considering proposals for considerably extending the period of rest; for increasing the mother's food ration still more; and, most interesting of all, for allowing her fuel for an extra room in her house. The object of this last is to encourage her to set apart a room separate from the rest of the family for herself and her child.

Consultation depots for mothers, milk distributing centres, infants' homes, crèches and day nurseries have been set up. It is a hard fight that must be waged to save the child life of Russia.

There are commune houses and colonies for the children when they grow older, and I have found that their parents have plenty of freedom in visiting them. So far I have not come across any instance of compulsion used to put children into institutions other than for crimes. The greater certainty of their children receiving food and clothing in Soviet institutions induces some mothers and fathers to place them in these houses, homes, and colonies.

No religion is taught in the schools or colonies except that the significance of certain religious holidays is explained. Parents may visit their children on Sundays and give them instruction in religion if they desire, and both children and teachers are permitted to hang ikons on their beds.

COMRADE EMERY SENT TO PRISON.

H. M. Emery, a member of the Coventry Communist Party, was tried at Birmingham before Lord Ilkeston on a charge of making a seditious speech in Birmingham on February 21st.

Emery conducted his case in a very able and eloquent manner, and succeeded in drawing many damaging admissions from the witness appearing on behalf of the C.I.D.

The detective who made the shorthand notes admitted they were not a verbatim report, but parts of the speech that suited him best to "take down as he thought fit."

Emery was able to show that the charges made against him were from parts of his speech that had been taken from their context and made use of in such a garbled way as to be interpreted in a manner totally different, than if the speech had been taken down verbatim; e.g., Emery is reported to have said, "When I get you *warm*, I am going to sell you some pamphlets." What he actually did say was, "I *warn* you I am going to sell you some pamphlets."

Again, the Police report stated that Emery said "I think I have driven *the word Revolution* into the 2,000 who are out of work at Leamington." What Emery did say, in this case, was, "I think I have driven *the meaning of the word Revolution*," etc.

Again, the Police report stated "that in Coventry the unemployed had Socialist Science and Industrial Working Classes" instead of "Social Science and Industrial History Classes."

In cross-examination, one of the Police witnesses admitted he couldn't remember anything that Emery had stated on February 21st."

In a very well-reasoned speech from the Dock, Emery stated: "I believe the class-struggle must be resolved and ended. It can only be ended by removing the system which produces it. We Communists did not create the class-struggle, we are created by the class-struggle. This trial is evidence of the class-struggle—evidence of its increasing bitterness. The recent arrests of Communists, Comrades Pankhurst, Malone, Harvey, Steele, Webb, Gallacher and myself, only demonstrates to the workers that the ruling class fears the knowledge we possess being given to the workers; demonstrates most clearly that our bourgeois democracy is no democracy. They may imprison us, tear us from our homes—yes, they may murder us—but for every one put into prison and branded as a criminal, a dozen will arise and fill the gap in the fighting line. From this dock I solemnly affirm that the cause of the workers is dearer to me than life itself. There is only one crime I can commit, that is to be false to the cause of the workers' fight for emancipation."

The stipendiary found Emery guilty and sentenced him to two months in the Second Division.

OUR COMPETITION.

¶ 1. The *Workers' Dreadnought* will publish and circulate at the lowest possible price, a pamphlet explaining in an easy and convincing style, the meaning of Communism and affiliation to the Third International.

¶ 2. No money prize will be given, but the author of the accepted MS. will receive free 200 copies of the pamphlet.

¶ 3. The MS. should reach the *Workers' Dreadnought* offices—in a *registered letter* (please note this point)—not later than March 25th, 1921.

¶ 4. The pamphlet should be of not less than 6,000 words and not more than 10,000. The MS. should be written, or typed, on one side of the paper only.

¶ 5. The MS. should reach us unsigned, and consequently the name of the author should not appear on any of the pages of the MS., nor on any part of the *registered packet* that contains it.

¶ 6. On the other hand, a *nom de plume* or a *set of figures*, should appear on the first and last page of the MS.

¶ 7. When sending the *registered letter* to us, the counterfoil must be KEPT, to be produced at a later date. The possession of the Certificate of Registration will be deemed the proof of authorship, both in the case of the successful competitor and of the others, to whom their MS. will be returned.

¶ 8. In an issue in April, the *Workers' Dreadnought* will publish the number of the registered letter that contained the accepted manuscript and will then invite the successful competitor to send in his or her name. Should the author desire to remain anonymous the *Workers' Dreadnought* will proceed without further delay to publish the pamphlet.

¶ 9. The *Workers' Dreadnought* reserves the right to publish at a subsequent date, either in full, or partially, in the paper itself, or in pamphlet form, the next best two MSS., and will announce the names of these competitors at the same time as that of the successful one.

¶ 10. The decision of the *Workers' Dreadnought* will be final.

"SOVIET RUSSIA AS I SAW IT IN 1920."

In the issue for April 2nd, we shall start the publication, in serial form, of Comrade Pankhurst's book, "Soviet Russia as I Saw It in 1920."

Every book has its own history: how it came to be written and the purpose for which it was written. It is the missing chapter of every book and oftimes not the least interesting one.

Comrade Pankhurst was arrested—one of the first in the wave of reaction which is passing over us—soon after her return from Russia where she had gone—by underground ways—to attend the Second Congress of the Communist International.

She was sentenced to six months' imprisonment and taken to Holloway Prison. At that time she had only jotted down a few notes concerning her journey, for, having to return to England by a similar underground way, she could not carry with her documents of any sort, not to speak of photographs, etc. In fact, as chance would have it, she had to abandon, on her return journey, some of her personal belongings.

Once immured in Holloway, she felt that six months spent there might dim the freshness of her impressions, and that the book, if ever it were to be written, would suffer in consequence.

It was not a personal conceit: that of the traveller returning home after seeing strange sights, who thinks he "must" put pen to paper for the enlightenment of the less fortunate stay-at-home.

She was moved, on the contrary, by the greatness and by the magnitude of the social changes which have and are taking place in Russia and chiefly by the immense possibility that such changes carry with them: the great hopes of the unborn child to the expectant mother.

She had not gone to Russia as a journalist seeking for copy, for a sensational story. She had gone to Russia as a convinced Communist. What she saw, was seen with the enthusiastic eyes of one who feels to be part and parcel of that work of social rejuvenation: she returned fully convinced that Soviet Russia will win.

Hence a book that is unsaleable; that has been refused by ten publishers and by several firms of newspaper proprietors.

From Holloway she appealed against her sentence—although she knew that she could not obtain redress for her unjust sentence by capitalist justice—she appealed in order to gain a few weeks of temporary freedom simply to be able to write this book that stands as the testimony of her faith, even after the cold observation of the actual facts.

This book was written amidst great financial worries and difficulties of many kinds known only to her most intimate friends.

"Soviet Russia as I Saw It in 1920," will appear in the *Workers' Dreadnought* every week.

Since our resources do not allow the printing of an edition larger than that justified by definite orders, we ask comrades to order at once from the Manager, *Workers' Dreadnought*, 152, Fleet Street, London, E.C.4., the outside figure of the number of copies which they will be able to dispose of.

In so doing, they will assist to fight the boycott which the Capitalist Press and the Capitalist newspapers have raised against this book.

Synopsis of the Book.

An Illegal Journey Without Passport—Across the Arctic Sea to Soviet Russia—Visits to the North Russian Villages on the Arctic Coast—Position of the Schools and Soviets There—The Fishing Industry—Visit to a Detachment of the Red Navy at the Wireless Station There—Murmansk and its Experience of Allied Occupation—Its Present Position—Journey from Murmansk to Petrograd—Visit to Petrosavodsk—Petrograd—Moscow—Third International Conference: What the Various Parties Think of Each Other; Their Points of Agreement and Disagreement; What the International Thinks of the Russian Communists—Debates with and Visits to Lenin, Bukharin, Zinoviev, and Others—Education—Soviet Ideals of Marriage; New Laws and Their Effect—House of the Mother and Child; Baby Clinics, Orphanages and Institution—The Russian Communist Party; The Secret of its Power and Influence. Its Method of Organisation—A Conference of the Russian Communist Party—How the Soviets Work: Their Structure and Constitution—The Moscow Soviet—The Petrograd Soviet—Some Local Soviets—Russian Trades Unionism: Its Relation to the Communist Party and the Soviets—The Factory Committees and the Trades Unions—The Organisation of Industry and its Development—Visit to the Great Collonna Metal Factory, etc.: What and Where is the Scarcity?—Transport Difficulties: Train Fires and Their Causes—Food, Clothing, and Money—The British Trades Union Delegation to Russia: What the Russians Think of It—How the Delegation Got New Clothes—Mistakes of Mrs. Snowden and Other Members of the Delegation—War with Poland—1,500 Petrograd Communists Go to the Front.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PARIS COMMUNE.

To-day we celebrate the anniversary of the French Commune, and in deep reverence we commemorate those who fell in its defence.

Let not the hour pass without bringing home to our minds the significance of the glorious deeds of the Communists of fifty years ago. It was during the Paris Commune that, for the first time town workers broke the chains of wage-slavery and of political servitude and, grown to manhood, ruled themselves without financial masters.

The Paris Commune arose from the defeat of the Imperial French armies, just as Soviet Russia arose from the defeat of the armies of the Czar. As in Russia, the preceding years had witnessed great searching of soul and intense political propaganda. When, with the military defeat, the tinsel was laid bare which had covered the Imperial authority, the masses realised that the only living and binding force amongst the workers is that of mutual solidarity. Out of despair, out of hatred against the oppressors, the Paris Commune arose.

It was suppressed by the forces of International Capitalist reaction, by German guns, French bayonets, and English gold. The same reactionary forces which have joined hands to-day in the fight against Soviet Russia.

The ideal that had spurred on the Paris Communards was not defeated. It is unconquerable: for ever it springs from souls and minds desirous of justice.

It is the ideal that moved Spartacus, that moved Louise Michel, that to-day dominates the humble and obscure—but, oh! how important—defenders of Soviet Russia.

Paris of '70—'71 had not gone the full length of industrial evolution, although she was at that time not a mean city in that respect. Capitalism had not reached its catastrophic maturity that our super-Marxians demand as a condition for the overthrow of such economic system. Yet Paris could accomplish the heroic deed, for the "will to act" was there. Neither had Russia reached that stage of capitalist development, and yet she could free herself and resist aggression, for the "will to act" was there also.

It was the want of class-consciousness in the workers of other countries that defeated the Paris Communards in their noble effort, not the adverse economic development. Just as to-day it is the want of solidarity and class-consciousness in the workers of countries more industrialised that allow the repeated counter-revolutionary attacks against Red Russia.

What welds together the chains of oppression is our supineness, our lack of initiative, of energy: the lack of faith.

Conditions may mar things, persons, events: they seldom make them.

It is the "will to act" that counts. There is no continuity in history but that of the unconquerable spirit of rebellion.

Periods of depression, of uncertainty may come. The same Paris that saw the Communards may witness to-day the antics of a grandson of Marx opposing, in an electoral struggle, Communists who are imprisoned and who are being tried—a sad sight, but not one that really matters.

The fire that burnt in the hearts of those who fought for the Paris Commune survived the massacres, the repression, the imprisonments that followed when "order" was restored. It will survive all political chicanery: the present forces of the reaction, the power of gold, the power of the White Guards.

That is the inner significance of the Paris Commune.

DEVELOPMENT FUND.

Think it over and tell your friends about it.

The Comrades responsible for the continuation of the "Workers' Dreadnought" wish to inform members of the Party and sympathisers that the sales of the paper do not yet cover its cost of production. The ultimate cure is increased sales by branches, and a concerted effort all round to obtain subscribers.

We have printed a certain number of forms that any group, branch, or person can carry about with them, sell when the opportunity arises, in meeting or in conversations in the shop, making a small profit for themselves, to cover expenses, or devote to assist any special form of propaganda they are mostly interested in.

With a newly-formed party, having its own official organ, however, we recognise that all this cannot be achieved in a moment, and therefore we have decided to keep open the Development Fund.

All those who desire to see the paper live are invited to contribute. This fund will be strictly confined to financing the paper. Let the Development Fund be a thermometer measuring our revolutionary fervour. All donations will be acknowledged through the columns of the paper. The shilling is as useful as the pound, in its way.

OUR BOOKSHELF.

NATIONAL AND COLONIAL QUESTIONS.

(Theses of the Second Congress of the Communist International. Communist Party. 16 pp. 2d.)

The introduction to these Theses, by the E.C. of the British Communist Party, clearly gives the triple bases of Imperialism. In the first place, the British Empire is an inexhaustible field of exploitation for surplus capital; secondly it has an inexhaustible supply of cheap labour; thirdly an inexhaustible supply of military force.

The introduction also declares that the "Labour Party policy towards the Empire is not a Labour policy: it is only the old Liberal policy over again. It has inherited all the old cries of nationalisation and Home Rule and national emancipation. These cries ignore class, and therefore they are false."

These Theses are of the utmost importance, and the attentive study of them will assist Comrades to understand many questions mentioned in their daily papers, that at first sight might appear obscure.

ECONOMICS.—*Continued from page 3.*

you they live on wages paid to you by Messrs. So and So; but will describe some of the favourite puddings that mother made, or chocolates made by the *worker* of some chocolate firm, and if you ask what keeps them warm, they will show you their boots and clothes, either made by the mother or by the *workers* of a clothing and boot factory.

As for the second part of your objection: Who runs the factory where you work? Who cleans the machinery? Who sets it going? Who minds the looms? Who packs up the goods? Who puts them on the rail? The "boss"? I don't think so. True, you want brains at the head of a factory. I fear *yours* are not good enough, or you would not be so afraid of doing without the "boss"; but there are some workers' brains which are quite capable of running a factory or a farm, or a mine, or a Workers' Republic.

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